

SCADDING

SHAKESPEARE
THE SEER

1897



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SHAKESPEARE,
C

THE SEER—THE INTERPRETER.

THE ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE ST. GEORGE'S
SOCIETY OF TORONTO,
IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. JAMES,
APRIL THE 23RD, 1864.

BY

THE REV. DR. SCADDING,

Senior Chaplain to the Society,
Etc., Etc.

REPRINTED.

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THE COPP, CLARK COMPANY, LIMITED.
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PREFACE.

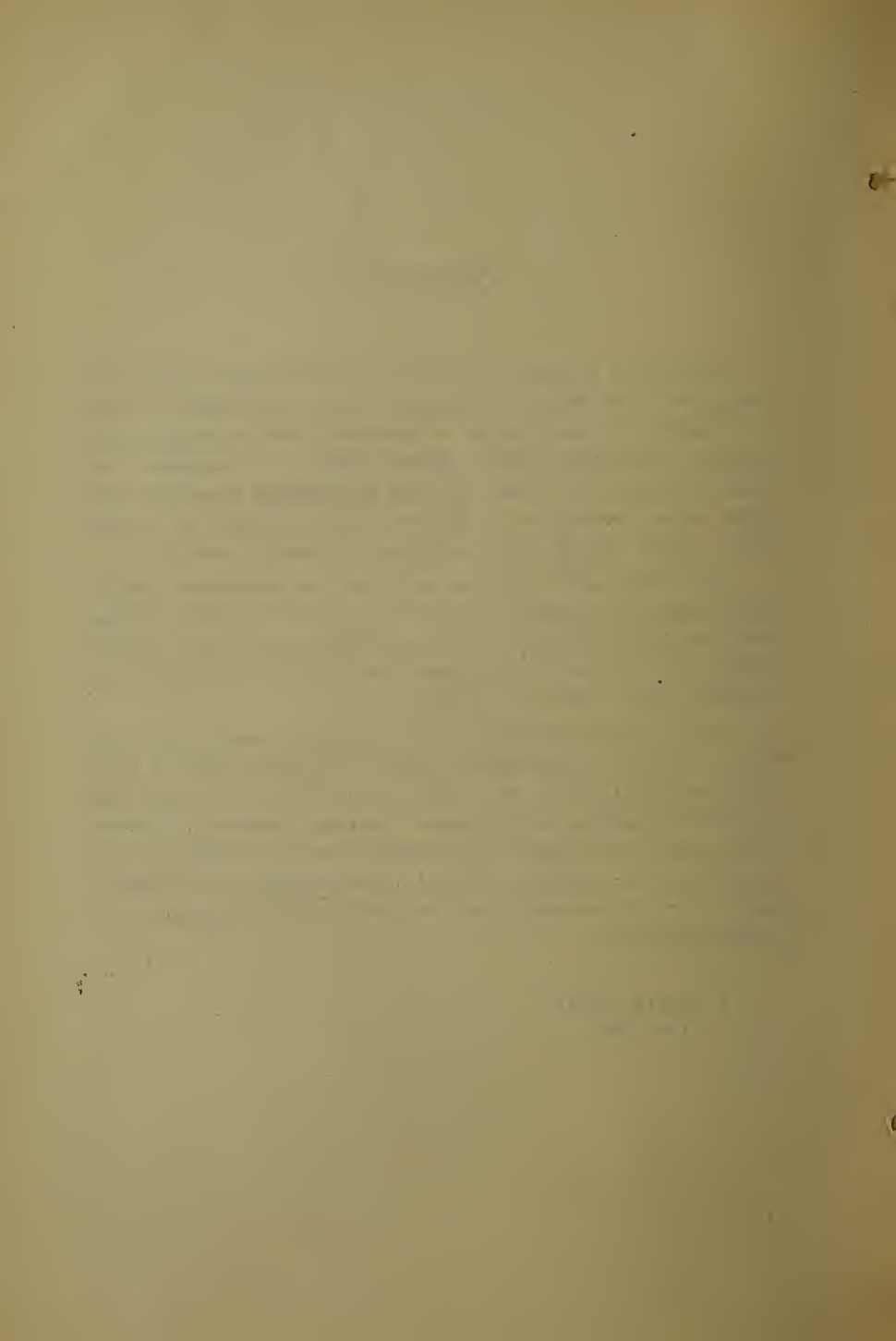
Having taken a good deal of pains and had very great pleasure in the composition of the following Tercentenary Address, and believing that there are contained in it some thoughts of importance to any one wishing to have just views of the great English Literature which is our inheritance, I am naturally desirous that it should not prove so immediately evanescent as such public lectures generally are. I therefore readily comply with the expressed desire of the St. George's Society and others, and permit its publication.

Some matters which I could not well, under the circumstances—*théologie oblige*—work into the text, I have added at the end in the form of Notes. Here several points connected with the general subject will be found concisely touched on. The whole of this Appendix will, I think, be considered by the intelligent reader, valuable and interesting.

For the proper understanding of the phraseology in several places in the Address, it should be mentioned that there was originally prefixed to it, the 130th verse of the 119th Psalm—"The entrance of Thy words giveth light : it giveth understanding unto the simple"—as being expressive on the whole, of the general idea desired to be conveyed of what was deemed to be the prime cause of the soundness and richness of the great bulk of our Literature, and of what is consequently its place and possible use in the education of the English-speaking races.

H. S.

6 TRINITY SQUARE,
June, 1864.



SHAKESPEARE,

THE SEER—THE INTERPRETER.

I. INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. *The Era of Shakespeare.*

Why do the men of this generation turn back their thoughts so often to the generation of their fellow-men who lived some three or four hundred years ago? It is because that generation witnessed the commencement of a great crisis in human affairs, which affected deeply, in a variety of ways, our forefathers of *that* day, and their brother-men throughout all Europe; which has affected every generation of the descendants of these; which affects all Europe now; and through it, touches ourselves and all other communities of men on these western continents. The movements begun at the commencement of the crisis, three and four hundred years ago, have not worked themselves out. We all feel ourselves this day borne onward on one or other of the liftings in the great undulation of thought and new experience which then had its beginning, and which must be looked at in its origin, or it cannot be understood. The more the era referred to is studied, the more firmly will it be believed that there was about that time a special "lighting-down" of the divine Arm upon the earth, with a mingled purpose of justice and mercy:—an interposition, not miraculous in the common acceptation of the term, but one of which men, unconsciously but peculiarly fitted, were made the instruments.

It would seem as if, in the order of Divine Providence, the fulness of time was come when men should be permitted to make great discoveries; when glimpses were to be allowed them even into the economy of the physical universe; when it was to be made known, by certain undeniable proofs, that the globe which they inhabit is not, as it had been mostly imagined, the centre of the celestial system, but a mere unit in an unnumbered multitude of worlds—a revelation of itself sufficiently startling to revolutionize the prevalent philosophy and theology of the era;—and in corroboration of the new cosmical doctrine, the round earth was to be circumnavigated; the way to the East was to be seen to be by the West; and in following that track vast islands, new continents, which barred the way, with nations and tribes and languages undreamed of, were to be stumbled on; and enkindle the wondering sympathies of all hearts and all imaginations.

It is now between three and four hundred years ago that Copernicus lived, that Columbus lived. It is exactly three hundred years since Galileo lived ; it is almost that since Raleigh coasted and gave name to the Virginian shore ; it is a little more than that since Cartier ascended the St. Lawrence, and since Balboa,—

“ With eagle eyes
Stared at the Pacific, and all his men
Looked at each other in a wild surmise,
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.”

These great discoverers and adventurers had, we doubt not, stirring within them impulses from a divine spirit, with which the mental atmosphere of their day was charged, entering into and rousing to action the human souls that were found meet and sympathetic.

§ 2. *Invention of Printing.*

Then too, to provide a vehicle from man to man of the marvellous additions to human knowledge, which in so many directions were being made, and as an enduring means of recording the same, Printing was devised : it was put into the heart of ingenious artisans to construct, first, stereotypic tablets in wood ;—and then at last, movable types in metal, which, by arrangement and re-arrangement, should be put into any variety of combination, and create duplicates of every mental product, to an infinite extent, rendering thereby common to all men, and imperishable, the theories, the experiences, the conclusions, of each successive generation. It is four hundred years since Coster lived ; since Faust lived ; since Guttenberg and Schœffer lived—inventors all ; we are fain to think, in whom a divine spirit likewise moved.

But antecedently to these inventions and to these searchings of the round world, and we may well believe, causative of them to a very great degree,—another stirring of men’s minds had been taking place, in another direction.

§ 3. *The Sacred Scriptures Translated.*

Among civilized men, we know, religion, so far as it is objectively concerned, has always rested on a sacred literature. A collection of essential books,—a *Bibliotheca divina*—the accumulation of ages, has always been the *litera scripta*, the unchangeable abiding record of principles, the last appeal in all matters of religion, not merely instinctive and subjective.

Now these essential writings, deposited among the Christianized nations of Europe, had, in the lapse of centuries, first by a silent innovation, and at length by inveterate abuse, become a dead letter. They were preserved indeed and guarded ; but it was as the poor African preserves and guards his fetich—superstitiously, and without intelligence. They were kept in tongues not understood of the peoples whom they were purposed to enlighten ; nay not understood of the majority among the class who were their professed guardians and expositors.

Where occasionally, as in the case of Wycliffe and others before him in Britain, and in the case of Huss with others before and after him on the Continent,

there were efforts to rescue the sacred literature from the durance in which it was held, and to set it free among the Christian nations in their respective mother-tongues, as it was originally delivered and as common sense dictated, then resistance as cruel as it was blind and unreasoning always arose on the part of the most powerful among its official keepers.

In the meantime, in the abeyance of these books of legitimate canons and principles, thus slumbering in unknown languages, there sprang up to take their place and rule men's minds in their stead, a code of dogma and of custom, rounded into system, which in the course of ages swelled to dimensions so gigantic, and teemed with complications so manifold and perplexing, that the whole became a yoke—the exact counterpart of the corrupted Judaism of old—too grievous to be borne.

In each successive age,—as we have seen already in Huss and other “bright harbingers” of the dawn,—there were a few whose eyes were opened to see the impostures by which they were surrounded, and to give warnings to their fellow-men thereof, at the cost of reputation, and in repeated instances, of life. These few became many at the time of the great crisis of three and four hundred years ago.

Taking advantage of the new art, in 1462 the whole of the sacred books—but still kept in the common Latin—were printed, and circulated in greater numbers than was possible when copies could be multiplied only by the pen.

In 1467 the same books were printed in the vernacular German; in 1530, in the vernacular French. In 1526 Tyndall printed in English the books of the New Testament. In 1535 was in like manner published the whole of the Old and New Testament, by Coverdale. (Note I.) The condition of the great movement in the mental life of the age, may be judged of by the royal edict, very soon afterwards issued (1536), ordering every ecclesiastical person in charge of a church within the realm, to “provide a book of the whole Bible, both in Latin and also in English, and to lay the same in the Quire, for every man that will to look and read thereon” (*vide* Burnet iv. 91); and by the similar injunction in 1547, that a copy of the “Paraphrase” or Commentary of Erasmus on the New Testament, in English, should also be placed for the same purpose in every parish-church. (Burnet ii. 43.)

The removing of one would lead gradually to the lifting off of every unlawful yoke. The process indeed was destined to be a tedious one: but it is interesting to notice how among the early castings about on the part of our people and nation, for a just human freedom, the cue was ever taken or given in manner such as this. Whatever was held to be Truth sacred and fundamental, *this* it was, albeit there might be many a mistake concerning it, which was to *be* free and to *make* free.

The same unearthly leaven was, as we know, at work throughout the continent of Europe. At the beginning of 1500 Luther and Melancthon were in their might, the labour of whose lives was to promote a real understanding of the substance of the ancient Hebrew and the later Christian writings. In 1527, Erasmus, the father of modern biblical criticism, put forth the fourth edition of his New Testament.

§ 4. *Revival of Letters.*

Conspiring with this interest in the literature of religion, and promotive of it, was what is commonly called the Revival of letters—the revival of the study especially of the Greek and Hebrew languages—the languages in which the sacred literature had been composed—both of which had fallen out of rational and extended use in Europe. But, four hundred years ago, by means especially of the re-conquests on the part of the Christian power in Spain, and the consequent greater inter-communication there, between oriental and western minds, the Hebrew tongue began to be intelligently cultivated. While about the same time crowds of learned Greeks, scattered over Europe after the capture of Constantinople in 1453, gained a subsistence by imparting their native language to the scholars of the west.

The new learning as it was called—the renewed study of the neglected dialects of the sacred literature—was identified with the so-called new, but in reality old principles of thought and life—old as the idea of man himself in the Divine mind. Just as now, it is again the revival in modern times of an intelligent study of the same languages, combined with a wider acquaintance with all languages, that has given rise to the criticisms which occasion to inadequately informed minds such immense, but when calmly studied in the light of history, such irrational alarms. Just as then—so now,—let no man for a moment doubt that in due time, and by the patient employment of obvious means, the problem of Textual certitude will, under God's guidance, solve itself; as so many other problems in the same relation have done to the increased enlightenment of man and relief of his estate during the last three centuries of European progress. (Note II.)

But to return to the era at which we were glancing. Notwithstanding persistent efforts to curb and crush it, on the part of all who felt their authority undermined, an irrepressible activity of mind manifested itself more and more, in all classes, exercising itself with the curiosity of youth on all subjects of human inquiry. Thought once enkindled was loth to be put out.

Especially was each one's inner manhood roused to a new consciousness by the spirit of the teachings discovered to exist in the long-neglected *Bibliotheca* of religion—teachings felt to be suited to himself, alike by the philosopher and the unlearned. The entrance—the re-entrance of these divine words into the social world of England and of Europe, gave light,—gave understanding even to the simple—gave a dignity—a new meaning and value—to life, in the consciousness of prince and peasant, of woman and child.

Then it was, in the midst of this ferment in which mingled so largely an element that was divine, that the great fundamental writers of our wonderful English literature began to deliver to the world their profound, exhaustive Treatises.

Then the learned and judicious Hooker wrote his Books "Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity," in which, it was once said, "there are such seeds of eternity that they will last till the last fire shall consume all learning."

Then it was that appeared, and studied and philosophized, the great Bacon, the founder of the modern Inductive Science, the author, in a double sense, of the *Great Instauration* of the *Novum Organon*—the new Instrument by which the Advancement of Human Learning was in all after-time to be secured.

§ 5. *Especial Sympathy of the Present Age with the Era Three Hundred Years Ago.*

Now, the men of our day love to lay hold of occasions for reverting to the stirring era of which we have been speaking,—to place themselves, so far as they may, in the midst of its surroundings—because they, to a greater extent and in larger numbers than was the case with their immediate forefathers, have learned to sympathize with it. In the present generation, to a greater extent than in any preceding one, History has been revived—History in its legitimate sense, laborious and truth-seeking, without regard to bye-ends.

This has in some degree brought back to men's minds, in intelligible form, the reality of things as they were, in many of the ages that are past. And among the men of our time, there are found more perhaps than existed in any preceding age, who, thus, through the resuscitations of history, have had their hearts set aglow with fellow-feeling for those of their fellow-men, who, when the odds were so against them, encountered the early shocks in the battle between Darkness and Light.

In the midst of that battle, are we not all amazed still to find ourselves? The energy of the opposing hosts, though severely taxed, and fluctuating on both sides from time to time, has not been exhausted in the struggle. And we discover from experience, that we too, like our forefathers, must manfully contend yet in a variety of respects, if advances in human knowledge—in human well-being—are to be maintained—are to be yet extended.

So that our commemorations of the heroes of three and four hundred years ago—our anniversaries of events that took place in those now far-distant times of refreshment, are not only convenient *epochæ*, pausing-places from whence to review the past, and look forward hopefully into the future, but they assume likewise, in some instances, the character of declarations of principles—and protests—too hot and impatient oftentimes,—against falsehoods and wrongs that for wise though inscrutable purposes are permitted to be long a-dying. (Note III.)

But why this prelude to the subject of the day? It is that we may see the place and function of the great poet whose birth we commemorate.

§ 6. *The Era Opportune for the Appearance of such a Poet.*

In the midst of the great outburst of new thought and new life, three hundred years ago, he also appeared and spoke. And we cannot but believe that he too was one of the elements, divinely ordained, and therefore beneficent, nay, required, in the renovations that were to be.

Just when the western mind had broken away from the traditions of a philosophy and a faith equally debased, bursting through the vexatious meshes thrown over it in the lapse of years, metaphysically by a Thomas Aquinas or a Duns Scotus, and physically by a Hildebrand ; and when it had not yet had time to forge again for itself, as in a few years it proceeded to do—on anvils Greek and Latin and Jewish, new chains—just at this happy juncture, his astonishing gifts of intellect began with a natural freedom to unfold themselves ; and by degrees to become mature,—not by what would have been to him the cramping discipline of schools and books, but by dint of a quick and keen observation ; by an immediate experience of life, an early implication in family joys and cares ; by a large intercourse with men—with men at length, of the highest refinement, the greatest mental endowment, the most extended familiarity with the daring enterprises of the age.

§ 7. *To the British Race pre-eminently a Seer and an Interpreter.*

The entrance of the divine words had given light, had given understanding unto the simple : and in him, to a degree without parallel, in a manner, and in directions, without example among the normal sons of men, were awakened intuitions and visions which, clothed in words with an ease, a brevity, a power never before or since attained—have for their perfect human kindness and grace rendered all after-ages grateful and loving towards him. In this way he has become, in respect of the common life of man in all its aspects and experiences, especially as developed amongst ourselves and the other English-speaking portions of the human race, pre-eminently THE SEER and THE INTERPRETER.

This is indeed, what all poets are, whose words men do not willingly let die : one in this direction, another in that. We cherish their utterances because they say what we would like to say : they express for us what we have on some occasion, dimly thought or vaguely felt ; they define and embody the faint, transient mental glimpses, the otherwise quickly forgotten glimmerings of phantasy, imagination, inward light,—call it what you will,—which have mysteriously visited ourselves. But our national poet has deserved the titles—SEER—INTERPRETER—beyond all other men, because his field of view, his sphere of insight and open speech, embraced with an astonishing completeness the areas great and small, ethereal and earthly, of every other poetic thinker.

The manifestation of such an one in the midst of the yeasty seethings of British and European society three hundred years ago—made the programme, so to speak, of the commenced renovation more rounded and complete.

II. SHAKESPEARE THE SEER.

§ 1. *The Relations of his Sphere of View.*

Whilst powerful minds were found ready and willing and able to enter into the heart of the fermenting chaos, and develop out from the midst of it, enduring because truthful systems of Religious Thought and Organization ; enduring because truthful systems of Philosophy, of Government, of Law, of Discovery, of Colonization—here was a man who was to embody in beautiful conceptions and words, what fell not formally within the provinces of the others, but what nevertheless, in certain points of view, was not alien to the province of any one of them—the inseparable accidents of our nature,—the feelings, the aspirations, the hopes, the fears, the yearnings, the playful conceits, the blameless, nay, the happy, mercifully-contrived imaginations ever attendant on common human affairs—attendant on friendship, on companionship, on solitariness ; on family and social relations.

The existence of such an one, having power to accomplish this, in such a way as that the emanations of his brain should prove sources of counsel and comfort and purest delectation to after-generations of men, was, we must conceive, not without purpose, in the divine ordering of things ; and if so, it is becoming in us, as thoughtful believing men, to acknowledge it ; and to confess likewise that the relics of such an one, the remaining records of his words, are not to be lightly valued, but to be held in honour, and duly used.

§ 2. *A Literature a fore-ordained Human Development.*

I sometimes think that in that tendency to narrowness which besets us all, we are apt to neglect a hint divinely intended to be taken by us, from the palpable fact, that our religion as Christians is grounded, objectively at least, on a Literature,—on a series of sacred books, greatly varied in contents and style, the product, the accumulation from time to time, of a long succession of generations. That hint was this—that a Literature, vast and varied, was to be an essential development in the predestined progress of man : that man, constituted as he is, intellectually—was fore-ordained to develop *graphai*—*scriptura*—books—on all the topics of human thought (as we see he has done) as instinctively as he was to erect buildings for shelter and utility and beauty ; and that these products of his intellect and spirit were to be at once the indices and helpful ministers of his civilization.

§ 3. *Caution Against Confounding Secular with Sacred Writings.*

In speaking thus, we are not putting the two literatures on an equality, the sacred and ancient with the merely so-called secular and modern. That, by which the hint was given (it is through hints that man is divinely educated)—is, like the original of all things on the earth and throughout the wide universe, *sui generis*—is DIVINE : but this we say,—that the secondary development fore-

shadowed by the primary, is in accordance with the Divine will, and is so in all its departments and all its forms, notwithstanding that it has come to pass, that here also, as in other earthly things, evil has in some degree become mingled with the good.

We make this remark for the purpose of vindicating, so far as we may, the marvellous phenomena of Human Literature, past and present, from the contempt which is sometimes sought, rather blindly, to be cast upon it by a narrow dogmatism, which would stigmatize it all, indirectly, as a mixed congeries of filthy rags and splendid sins. To entertain such a thought as this, is, I think, to ignore foolishly the plans of God.

§ 4. *All the Human Faculties to be Developed and Made Productive.*

It cannot be gainsaid that when man was divinely endowed with his faculties, it was intended that they should all be developed to the fullest extent of their capacity: that where the gifts were largest, and most perfect, there the developments should be the largest and most perfect; and that these highest and most perfect developments of genius and intellect should serve as helps, as lights, as encouragements, as consolations, to all inferior grades of men and minds in *their* developments cotemporary and subsequent.

Thus by action and reaction between great and little, between less and more, under divine supervision, under influences apparently human, but really super-human, was the human race destined to educate itself, as we see it has to some extent done, though as yet coming far short of what is clearly possible and desirable, both in regard to the point attained, and the numbers embraced.

Now, at seasons of especial stirring in the affairs of men, in marked transitions from old things to new and better, it might be expected,—as we may believe it was divinely intended,—that there should be in literary form, especial developments—developments of especial importance to after generations. In proportion as the movement itself was something “quick and powerful,” pregnant with results to the bettering of after generations, we might expect its intellectual products would be over-ruled to be especially deserving of earnest study. And do we not find this to be the fact?

Such a season of movement and of corresponding production, prolific and precious, was, as we have seen, the era of three hundred years ago, when the great men already named, with many others who are unnamed, in various degrees resembling them, lived, and thought, and wrote.

§ 5. *All the Activities of the Human Mind may be Harmonious.*

By maintaining it to be the divine plan, that in the predestined, though not fulfilled education of man, ALL his faculties should receive culture, we get rid of the antagonism often sought to be fostered between the culture of the religious instinct, and the culture of the other gifts and faculties of man,—an antagonism that has proved more fatal than any other thing to his progress. And we at the

same time acquire a confidence that the co-ordinate cultivation of all the faculties is the right education ; that the cultivation of one of them, to the undue ignoring or depreciating of the rest, is mischievous and wrong.

§ 6. *Ideality to be Cultivated.*

Now if what has been said has any foundation in truth and reality, it is certainly the divine will as evinced among the developments of the great outburst of intellectual life, three hundred years ago, that in the progress of man's education and improvement, his IMAGINATION should be supplied with fitting food.

What a gift—what a power, more or less, in every man, is this which we call the Imagination ! When healthy and lighted up with a pure light, how inspiring, how stimulating, how sustaining ! When morbid, and darkened by the darkness with which hateful superstitions have so often succeeded in filling it, how demoralizing, how debasing, how unmanning ! During the centuries preceding the era of which we have spoken, the Miracle Plays, the Moralities, the Dances of Death may have served, and doubtless did serve, in some respects as *biblia pauperum*—rude instructors to the profoundly illiterate in the absence of intelligent oral teaching ; but think what the cruel, life-long effects on the delicate phantasy of young children and others, of some of their most hideous representations must have been ! We see what their effect was on the minds of writers and painters, in the cheerless pages of Dante, and the inhuman frescoes of the *Campo Santo* of Pisa.

§ 7. *Shakespeare may train the Imagination.*

Behold then here the function,—the predestined, divinely-intended function of our great English Poet. He was the SEER—the great imaginative Seer, for his fellow-men. He added to their eyes “a precious seeing.” All true poets are seers, indeed, as we have said ; but he was so pre-eminently. His eyes were opened as those of no other, so far as we know, have ever been to delicate and subtle insights into the forms, the essences, the inner being and motive of things, while at the same time he possessed the power of fixing his visions—all beautiful, natural, simple, truthful—in words, for the recognition, the delight, the refinement of less-gifted but sympathetic minds,—that is to say, of ALL minds, when the opportunity is either gained or granted.

While the great philosopher Bacon was driving off from the fields of human thought the *idola*, the spectral shapes which haunted them, hindering the free progress of knowledge, the great Poet was bringing in his *idyllia*, his beautiful forms, to be possessions and joys for ever, no impediments, but rather furtherances to every thing good and true. (Note IV.)

Thus has nutriment for the Imagination in the modern civilized man been provided,—nutriment suited to his wants, helping forward his improvement, co-operating with his development in every direction, purged, so far as may be, of the taint of evil.

If the Imagination was to continue a power, as it had always been, in the elevating and refining of men, some such new aliment was required ; for the great poems

and dramas of the Greek and Roman civilizations, however impossible it might be that they should ever become wholly obsolete, were no longer the pictures of living men and women to mould the character of modern generations.

That the Imagination *was* to be a power in the civilization of which Christianity was destined to be the prime element, is hinted to us, nay is most unmistakably implied—by the sublime exercises to which this faculty is called in the study of the sacred Literature on which our religion rests, and is to rest to the end of time.

How few there are who have ever adequately realized in the magic mirror within them, on which celestial visions are sought to be flashed, the true grandeur, the ineffable sublimity, the tender grace and perfect art, so plentifully to be discovered in the poetic and dramatic portions of the Old Testament and of the New?

Who pictures in his mind as vividly as he ought, and as by the aid of fitting guide he might, the “express image” of Him who throughout Christendom is the central Object of all human interest?

“Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known ME, Philip?” To how many if closely tested, after years perhaps of wordy teaching without wise culture of the imagination, might not a like gentle reproach be addressed!

§ 8. *Ideality an Aid to Faith.*

It is in this faculty, rightly informed, that a lively faith finds a potent aid in mastering the evidence of things unseen. By such a combination of gift and grace the student of Scripture and of history makes the personal acquaintance, so to speak, of St. Paul, of St. John, of all saintly and noble characters. Nay, more: it is this combination which has had the effect in many an instance of rendering strong the weak, of causing men to stop the mouths of lions, to quench the violence of fire.

Beyond question, it is the divine intention that all things set before us in the literature of our religion should be somewhat thus adequately realized in order that we may turn them to practical account in the regulation of the life.

Why now are they not thus effectively realized so generally as they should be? Because, as we have said, the Imagination has not received so generally as it ought the delicate culture which it needs. Because, on the contrary, in many an instance in modern times, as in the mediæval, it has been provided with fare coarse and revolting; and in addition to that, been insulted by vain terrors and cruel mockeries in relation especially to religious subjects, until it would fain flee away from the contemplation of them altogether.

In this department of men's training in the process of a modern Christian civilization, excellent service is done by the beautiful visions and intuitions of the great SEER as moulded by him into language;—and as transferred for us by a thousand hands skilled in illustration, to canvas, to plates of steel, to sheets of copper, to broad blocks of wood, to marble, to bronze, to parian, or whatever other thing or substance there may be, by means of which ever-living Art still strives, without a symptom of flagging or exhaustion, to “serve his wit.”

III. SHAKESPEARE THE INTERPRETER.

§ 1. *His Visions not only Described but Interpreted.*

But again : in a region lower perhaps, it may be thought ; amidst things less ethereal, less impalpable, our great Poet has a function, not less wonderfully, not less perfectly executed, than is that which he fulfils in regard to the Imagination. He not only sees, and depicts his visions, so that we may also see them as in a glass, and examine them ; but he goes minutely into the actions, little as well as great, of the numerous persons, notable and secondary, whom he brings before us. In doing this, he has proved himself the Interpreter of the every-day life of men—of all men.

§ 2. *The Relations of Things and Natural Sympathies Interpreted by him.*

Kings, Statesmen, Historians, Philosophers, Divines, learn from him what they themselves are,—learn what are their own veritable relations to their fellow-men—better and more definitely than, in many an instance, they would perhaps ever have done without his aid. Into the inmost consciousness of all sorts and conditions, in an infinite variety of situations, he passed, and translated it for them into words, brief, easy, luminous,—acknowledged at once as true. Womanhood in all its phases he divined by a marvellous intuition, and transmuted his ideal conceptions with a tender reverence, a just exactness, a consistent veri-similitude, into a group of concrete forms that have approached nearer than any other emanations from men to personal living creations.

All natural sympathies with youth, with boyhood, with childhood, with old age,—all the human feelings stirred by the names, father, mother, brother, comrade, friend—have in him perfect and plenteous expression. All trades, crafts, mysteries and callings, find through him a voice. Through the coarse or quaint wrappings of his rustics, his boors, his supposed incapables, his half-wits,—his trivial folk of the street in burgh or village—there gleam forth shrewd evidences of heart and material sense. Who ever entered the penetralia of so-called madness, mastering and disclosing its arcana, as he has done? His poor idiots all teach their lesson, and shew the human soul pent up within them. There is a moral purpose in his semi-brutish monster—that symbol of lowest human savagery brought, as in the history of colonization we so often see it brought, into immediate contact with highest and finest intellect, awed by it, hating it, yet insensibly, irresistibly drawn to it, though finding in the meantime more congenial fellowship in nature's immensely lower, but still raised, however slightly, above itself.

And to descend to the brute creation itself—to the irrational creatures of earth and air, associated, oftentimes domesticated with us, exposed to misery frequently and destruction by our caprice and inconsiderateness—in regard to these, the references in his works, are ever such as to betoken how humanly, how sympa-

thetically their ways, their movements, their instincts, their interchanges of meaning, had been regarded and noted down in his all-observant mind.

His presentments of the purely ideal beings—of fay and faery and phantom—with which the playful or fearful fancy of man has in all ages peopled the earth and the air, giving by the universality of that development of his instincts another token of his whence and his whither, his presentments of these will be instantly called to mind by us all as some of the most exquisite and most incomparable of his readings of the human heart.

§ 3. *The Poetry of Things Interpreted by Him.*

In one word—he has taught us—he has taught all who have put themselves in genial relations with him,—that there is nothing which is insignificant ; that there is nothing which is not capable of being lifted up into the sphere of charity ; that there is no human being, no right human relation ; no fond dreaming of the day or of the night, which may lightly be set down as common and of no account ; that there is no true natural accident or affection which is destitute of a savour of goodness—of an aroma of poetry—provided only we have a perception sufficiently delicate to detect it.

All this has been done by him with profound art, with perfect effect : in a spirit ever kindly ; without pretension, or affectation ; without strained exaggeration or undue burlesque. (Note V.)

§ 4. *The Lessons of Things Interpreted by Him.*

Furthermore : whilst discharging his function thus, as the great Interpreter of Life, embodying his intuitions in concrete forms, and setting them to act and react one on the other in every variety of relation, he threw off, during the process, with the exuberance and apparent informality of nature itself, lesson upon lesson of wisdom and of wit in its noblest sense, which have become with all the English-speaking portions of the world, heir-looms ; inalienable possessions, ever to be prized as principles and canons of motive and of conduct. (Note VI.)

§ 5. *A Hint Divinely Given that such Lessons Should be Treasured.*

And that we have here, again, another fore-ordained element to be employed in the process of modern Christian civilization, a hint,—as in the case just now referred to, of an enlightened and rightly-supplied imagination,—is, I think, given us in the Sacred Literature which is the ultimate appeal of our religion—the divine prototype of the secular developments in the literary direction, which so strikingly distinguish Christianized, civilized man.

That sacred Literature is, as we know, not all dogma. There is a cosmogony there. There is History there, varied, extensive, unique. There is poetry there, as we have already seen, employed apparently because it is a vehicle of thought congenial to man, pleasure-yielding, refining,—poetry devotional, idyllic, dramatic. There, extatic rhapsodies of inspired bard and prophet are to be met with and studied. There, are initiative types, divine germs of most—may we not say of

all?—of the developments of man in the direction of letters. If so, then there is also amongst them a division of scriptural matter suggestive of our duty in regard to the golden aphorisms, the terse presentments of wit and wisdom, profitable in the conduct of life, which are to be found scattered up and down in the writings of all true sages.

The maxims and proverbs devised, collected, reduced to rhythmic order by Solomon, by Agur, by Lemuel,—why were these preserved and incorporated in the sacred code but to give the hint that it would be well for men in every successive generation as a perpetual element in the process of civilization, to gather with care similar conclusions of a practical wisdom wheresoever they shall be recognized?

As a proof that some such practice prevailed among the immediate depositaries of the original collections, we have the Ecclesiasticus of Joshua the son of Sirach, the Panaretus of the pseudo-Solomon, the Treatises of Philo, the Visions, Commands and Similitudes of Hermas, with other subsequent works abounding with gnomes and wise maxims, sedulously read and applied “for examples of life and instruction in manners.”

§ 6. *Shakespeare Rich in Aphorisms, and those often Biblical in Tone.*

Now who is there who does not know, that in no field can the gleaner in this regard more quickly gather up a sheaf that shall yield grain worth the winnowing, than in the works of the great poet of England?

So akin in their tone and gravity are many of his sentences to Holy Writ, that very possibly some of them are sometimes quoted by us unconsciously as such. Akin indeed is his English everywhere to the English of the existing Translation, because he was the contemporary of those who executed that work, and he employed, just as they did, the common speech of the day, which, because it did its work at a stroke, seems to us now so telling.

Akin veritably are large numbers of his best dicta to the subject-matter of Holy Writ, for the reason that they are intentional reflections of it. Living in a community into which had freshly passed the divine words—the divine *logoi*, the absolute *rerum rationes*,—he, with all discerning men, recognized them and reproduced their substance. While akin again in another way, in their root and essence, to Holy Writ, are many more of the aphorisms which his spiritual insight enabled him to shape, inasmuch as they, like that, are in the strictest sense, of the truth; based deep down upon Truth’s outspread universal rock. (Note VI.)

§ 7. *Caution Against Confounding the Sacred with the Secular Precepts of Wisdom.*

Here again, as before, it is right that I should declare, that in speaking thus, the desire is not to place the secondary literature of this or any other poet or sage, on a level with the primary literature, which has been developed among men; that primary literature is, as we have said, like all originals of things, divine. But I aim to vindicate human literature generally, but especially that of modern civilized man in its manifold and wonderful outgrowths, from the stigma of commonness and uncleanness—of antagonism to God.

§ 8. *The Customary Objections Noticed.*

It will be easy indeed for any who feel inclined so to do, to cull out from the writings of the great poet now commemorated, this word and that expression, to cast in the face of all who may deem it not improper to speak of him in the connexions just indicated. Is *this* a conceit to refine the imagination with? Is *this* a phrase typified anywhere in the higher literature of our religion?

It will be sufficient to reply first:—It is for numerous reasons sincerely to be wished, that that conceit as it appears, that that phrase as it stands, were not there; it is even to be wished—if such a thing were possible—that for common use in families, only an edition of him should be in circulation wherein such stumbling-blocks do not present themselves: just as, for the sake of all who are compelled either to read, or to hear read, various portions of the ancient Hebrew, and some phrases in the later Christian, Scriptures, as they come before us now, in our received English translation,—it is earnestly to be wished that the day were fully come, when the general scholarship and the general intelligence shall be such as to admit of a safe and judicious revision in this respect and in some other respects—a homage reverently due to the Sacred Literature of our faith, and loyally to be paid, if we would commend it truthfully to the understanding and the love of our fellow-men, and hand it down to the generations following, as a sacred deposit, in the maintenance of whose purity and just appreciation we deemed no painstaking to be too great.

But, secondly, the objector must be cautioned:—Before you undertake to condemn in a final manner even such words and things as those to which allusion has been made, however condemnable in their isolation they may appear—various reasonable considerations are to be taken into account; as, for example, the general language of the age in which the poet lived, the character in whose mouth the matters objected to are put, the poet's intention perhaps of moral contrast, on the particular occasion, and so on. (Notes VII. and VIII.)

§ 9. *Shakespeare not here Regarded as a Dramatist.*

In these thoughts on our great poet, on this day and in this place, I should have gone beyond my province, had I attempted to regard him in the light of a dramatist. Nor do I think it will appear that this is the aspect in which his name will have enkindled enthusiasm to-day. This is the aspect in which he is almost exclusively regarded by those who from some derived or inherited prejudice, or from some impression of immature childhood, both continuing uncorrected by an intelligent study of his works—entertain unworthy, and, in some cases, bitter thoughts in regard to him;—and this is the aspect also in which he was almost exclusively regarded even by those who at the last memorable celebration of his birth, believed that they adequately appreciated him. The century that has passed since then, would not show itself to have been one of intellectual advancement, if, in that space of time, the conception of the poet in the minds of thinking men had not become higher and more comprehensive.

That the unfoldings of his genius took form in the drama was an accident in his history ; one of those accidents, however, which, as in so many other cases, contribute—so we do well to believe—to the fulfilment of divine plans. For in what other way in *his* age, could he have executed so effectively—with such spirit, such life, such fulness—his multiform ministry to his fellow-men ?

§ 10. *The Significance of the Drama in Past Times.*

At eras long anterior to his, we know, when other means of literary influence were even fewer and more scant, large masses of human beings used to be reached through this channel, intellectually—religiously. In the centre of the most ancient orchestras there was, in the conspicuous object called by the Greeks the *thymele*, or altar,—by the Latins the *pulpitum* or pulpit, a standing remembrancer to the assembled multitudes, of what was once the didactic significance of the drama.

May it not have been then, that in the case of one who was destined in the latter day to be so widely a teacher of truth, a preacher of righteousness, it was provided that, through the same old instrumentality, in the first instance, at least,—however circumstances in after-times should do away with its convenience—he should win the ear, and through that, the heart, of the greatest number.

§ 11. *Shakespeare here Regarded in the Abstract as Seer and Interpreter ; and as Mature.*

We have regarded him rather in the abstract as the seer who has seen the things of life, inner and outer, with a vision more subtle—as the interpreter who has read what he saw with a skill more perfect—moulded them into words with a clearness and briefness more acceptable—with adjuncts of instruction more full of wisdom—more far-reaching, more universal—than was ever conceived of before, or has ever been matched since. (Note IX.) We have regarded him too, not as in that process of gradual growth—intuitional, spiritual, intellectual—through which all human souls, even the most highly-endowed, must pass, but as in the meridian of his strength—as mature.

§ 12. *Not Here Regarded in his Personal Capacity.*

We have not regarded him in his personal capacity. Of his personal life, there is no man who knows anything which he can avouch with certitude—beyond what may be gleaned from a few very casual records. We have regarded him as a voice of wisdom uttering itself in our midst, through such channels as were granted to it—as one to be understood only from his words, like so many more of the great seers and interpreters, who have from time to time appeared on the earth ; who have come and gone and left no other sign but the message with which they were charged. That they were men not essentially different from ourselves, is a trivial fact which does not so much concern us, as the message. On that, and not on them—it was hinted—our curiosity should most beneficially exhaust itself.

It was foreseen that it would be better that they should become abstractions, shades of mighty name, than that their message should lose any of its power with men, through the reports of "a thousand peering littlenesses,"—who—(to use the words of the modern poet, who has so well caught the tone of the great seer and interpreter himself)—

"If they find
Some stain or blemish in a name of note,
Not grieving that their greatest are so small,
Inflate themselves with some insane delight,
And judge all nature from her feet of clay,
Without the will to lift their eyes, and see
Her godlike head crowned with spiritual fire,
And touching other worlds."

Tennyson, "Idyls," p. 121.

Like order seems to have been taken in regard to the great modern seer and interpreter of life. With a self-depreciation that was real, which commands on that account our reverence rather than our acquiescence, he, of his own accord, appears to have rendered a biography impossible: with a scorn of the "virtuous lies," so often vended in relation to the dead, he would have no friend hang upon him, when departed, "more praise than niggard Truth would willingly (*i.e.* voluntarily) impart!"

Even in regard to his works—those of them in particular on which the studies of posterity have been concentrated, he, with a modesty which is characteristic often of greatness, and compatible with a high ambition, the result of an unquenchable thirst after perfectness in the expression of beauty and truth, seems never to have collected them: like the ostrich-egg in the desert they were abandoned to their fate, one here, another there, as he advanced onwards to the maturity of his genius, stretching forth ever to those things which are before. So that they have come down to us in some respects not so sifted, not so pruned, not so homogeneous, as we can conceive they would have been, had they, at the close of his career, undergone the re-touchings of his own hand.

Hence we have in them, not only a mine of wisdom and thought, but also (as in the case of so many other bequests from the seers and thinkers of old time) legitimate subject-matter for the exercise of our discernment—for the testing of the critical faculty within us. (Note X.)

§ 13. *The Religious Convictions of Shakespeare as Gathered from his Recorded Words.*

Independently, however, of the casual records referred to,—of him personally, notwithstanding his self-depreciative reticence—we may gather from his own words, with certainty *this*:—which it is due to his memory to declare here with all clearness, for the admonition of a mixed assembly of his fellow-mortals,—that he was a man who knew as well as any, before him or since, that "all the souls that ever were, were forfeit once; and that He that might the vantage best have took, found out the remedy":—he knew and realized as well as any, that "in the

course of justice none should see salvation ;—that we all do pray for mercy ; and that that prayer doth teach us all to render deeds of mercy.” He knew as well as any, and realized more perfectly perhaps than many—“whose blessed feet were those, which, fourteen hundred years ago,” as he speaks, “were nailed for our advantage to the bitter cross.” He, whatever may be thought, had not left out of his regards that amazing spectacle ; nor had he failed to ponder its lesson. He had found there, even as, most thinking men do find, something to grasp—after floating, wavering, drifting hither and thither, long perhaps, on the shoreless sea of conjecture.

“Time’s thievish progress” by to-morrows, “to eternity,” had not failed to waken in his all-conscious, sensitive soul, the deep searchings which in all men are so becoming ; and we find him at the last, in anticipation of his end, which proved in fact to be near,—causing it to be recorded in his will—that his hope and assured belief, was, through the only merits of Jesus Christ his Saviour, as he speaks, to be made partaker of life everlasting.

§ 14. *The Religious Convictions of the Founders Generally of English Literature.*

Nor in this was he peculiar. The works of all the great thinkers of the era in which he lived are characterized in a like manner.

Those old Tomes in Latin and English, “laid in the Quire of every church, for every man that would to look and read thereon,” had done good service. From them as from a living oracle had come the word—“*Veritas liberabit vos*”—“The Truth shall set you free” ; “*Non est personarum acceptor Deus ; sed in omni gente qui timet eum et operatur justitiam, acceptus est Illi*”—“God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.” In the little knots that here and there over the broad land had from time to time gathered round to read or to hear such declarations as these, there had stood in the season of their quick youth the spirits who were to sway the coming generations.

The wonderful Literature of England, which, as the product and symbol of her modern civilization had its beginning three hundred years ago, was in every direction initiated by men who were not ashamed to show that they feared God—not ashamed to show that they had admitted into their intellects and their hearts the divine words—the *logoi*—the principles of truth absolute in regard to things visible and invisible, which were then beginning to circulate with such freshened energy throughout Christendom. (Note XI.)

§ 15. *English Literature not to be Ignored as Purely Secular by Religious Teachers.*

Here then is what it behooves us to bear in mind. This great Literature is not to be ignored, is not to be set down as a thing merely secular ; as something that religion need take no cognizance of. On the contrary, it is to be regarded and respected, as a predestined engine of power, in the process of our Christian civilization, wheresoever that shall extend. We see with our eyes how it has

grown with the growth of that : and what an instrument, as well as indication of progress, under the divine ordering, it has been.

In all its comprehensiveness then, it is something which it becomes us not to overlook. Above all does it become us to honour, and not condemn, the spirit of unaffected religion which its founders so generally evince.

§ 16. *This English Literature a Seed-Grain in Various Parts of the Earth.*

England, like the sacred Banyan tree of the East, has sent out over very large areas of the earth, branches of her stock, each in itself capable of sending down a root, and becoming an independent existence. In the course of centuries, how will the great globe be girt with nations of our blood and speech !

How full of interest is the reflection, that, everywhere, wherever our race penetrates and plants itself, there it takes with it and deposits, as the seed of further mental products, the fundamental works of such a literature !

§ 17. *English Literature a Bond of Union Among the English-Speaking Peoples.*

Whatever shall betide the off-shoots of our country historically in the future, here there must be a certain bond of unity, a moulding power in relation to intellect and character, which must maintain amongst them all a sense of kindred and Christian brotherhood.

To this result will tend the works of our great Interpreter of nature and humanity. They will serve, as much as anything, to perpetuate a oneness amidst whatever amount of diversity of polity and place may exist. And we may conceive of situations in the history of the future, in which cities, captive soldiers, families, individual men and women, shall have many a mitigation of loss and distress, by means of this tie ; just as cities, captive foes, families, and individuals are reported to have been spared by virtue of kin or acquaintance with poets of old.

§ 18. *Shakespeare Virtually a Type of the Colonist.*

In one point of view especially will our Seer and Interpreter be appreciated among the junior members of the family of nations,—among the human downrootings from the great mother-tree of England. He will be recognized amongst them as exhibiting and embodying in his history—even as they do in theirs—in a manner indeed not exactly the same, yet analogous and strongly marked—the BEAVER-INSTINCT—the instinct which, strong in themselves and their fathers before them, perpetuates, as it originated, the great colonizing movements of the latter day.

What is aimed at by the men who boldly determine to sever old local ties, and launch out into spheres of action new and untried ? What is the object of the struggles entered into so bravely there, which develop such before-undreamed-of energies, enthusiasms, economies ?—It is the establishment of a home—the acquisition of a property in soil, and visible structures for use, for repute, for beauty—which shall be identified with them and with families bearing their names in after-

generations. And what was he, in his inner heart, aiming at, during the twenty or thirty years of mental and bodily toil, seconded by appliances all the while so scant, so ignoble, in the state of life to which he had been led? What reconciled him, for so long a time, "finely-touched" in spirit as he was,—to a lot which forced him, as he speaks, "to go here and there, and make himself a motley to the view, to gore his own thoughts, to sell cheap what is most dear,"—to subsist by "public means," which tended, as he still speaks, to "breed public manners" in him—manners unretired, unstudent-like, undomestic; until he feared that at length his nature, which yearned all the while for privacy and quiet, and a larger share of liberal rest—would be subdued to what it worked in—tinctured "like the dyer's hand," indelibly, with the colours with which it had so much to deal?

He was toiling to make for himself a settled home, where he should be master of himself and of his time, where at liberty and in peace, heart and brain should be free to indulge their sacred instincts. Until this should be secured, he was fain to be as one of the exiled princes, whom his fancy liked to paint. A world-wide reputation was not what he was intent upon. The assurance of renown, immediate or posthumous, was not to be his consolation. His content was to be his best having. And when this was at last secured, it would seem as if he would almost have preferred that the record of his labours—the great port-folio which, as we may conceive, he had kept by him, of his pieces in all their conditions, crude, half-shaped, consummated—but still never anything else, as he would judge, but imperfect and fragmentary—should be buried in ocean, fathoms-deep. (Note XII.)

As the swarms from the old British hive have sought to repeat in all the world—in the several places where they have lighted—the old names—the old scenes—to keep fresh, so far as they could, the associations of their former home—so he longed that the place of his desired rest should be STRATFORD—where again he might commune as of old with Nature, the Mighty Mother, who, in his "dauntless infancy," had there so benignly "unveiled to him her awful face"; where, in the midst of the very scenes, where "the long, long thoughts of boyhood" had first visited him, he might haply persuade himself that even yet to some extent, "Youth and he were housemates still."

It is seldom that yearnings such as these, stimulating alike the movements of the home-emigrant and the colonial, are permitted to be fully gratified: and when gratified, the necessity of things renders brief the continuance of the boon. They are manifestations in our nature, which point to its immortality—to those "houses and possessions" eternal in the heavens, to which man is continually led to aspire. But, awakening in the hearts of each successive generation, it is of advantage that they should be indulged even in respect of earth: for although to individuals such gratifications must always be transitory and may be very brief,—to the race at large, the general result is enduring and essential.

With our great poet, as we know, the goal of his honest ambition in this respect was attained in the winning for himself, before decrepitude came on, an independence; and the acquisition in his native town of a goodly home, built to

his hand, and named NEW PLACE,—by a kind of omen of its destiny, when we regard its new owner, in his wonderful “many-sidedness,” as a type of the colonist also, albeit *he* found within the circuit of the Four Seas, *his* El Dorado—*his* Fountain of Youth. (Note XIII.)

§ 19. *Shakespeare the best Exponent of the British Character.*

In him, as moulded into ideal form out of the pure gold to be gathered in dust and beautiful concretions from his works, the English-speaking world will ever recognize their autochthon-poet, so to speak,—the poet most genuinely sprung of itself. In him, the living compound known as the British race, will ever find their own best exponent.

For is he not seen to have been—even as *it* also is—while essentially ambitious—and nobly so—yet unpretentious, reticent? While boldly adventurous, ready on occasion to tax purse and brain to the utmost, yet thrifty and prudent. Though in potentiality a king, a legislator, a commander, a *man*, in every most manly quality,—yet, in relation to the heart, the affections, and all the sights and sounds of external nature,—a woman, a child. Believing—rejoicing—in a hopeful future, yet making wise use of the present, respecting justly the past. Loyal to law and authority, jealous of infringement on liberty of speech and action. Alive to poesy: impatient of sentimentality. Full of philosophy, with not a spice of mysticism. Deeply religious, yet calmly critical of religion’s garb and profession. Scouting with a natural healthfulness the ascetic and the monk. By a kindly ridicule putting an end to everything like cant.

§ 19. “*Orbis Terrarum Britannicarum Genio.*”

In one word: could we bring ourselves to imagine—as used once to be imagined and believed—that there is such an abstraction as the Genius of a Race—an ethereal impersonation of its spirituality—its intellect—as external to itself—we might imagine that the Genius of our composite national race had a temporary avatar in this man—that his Genius was the national Genius, so congenial, as we say, are the two felt to be.

From a work lately published amongst us by a well-known scholar, it is familiar to us all that TO THE GENIUS OF THE LAND OF BRITAIN,—GENIO TERRÆ BRITANNICÆ,—altars were actually raised.

The altars ideally set up this day in a thousand places to the memory of our poet, bear an inscription of wider scope. TO THE GENIUS—not of the land of Britain merely—but—OF THE ORBIS TERRARUM BRITANNICARUM—OF THE WHOLE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD. (Note XIV.)

There are not a few to be found of other races and tongues, who would gladly assent to the scope of the epigraph being made wider still. (Notes XV., XVI., XVII., XVIII.)

IV. CONCLUSION.

§ 1. *The Functions of the Seer and Interpreter Fulfilled.*

Such honour is due to those who accomplish the divine will. Here was a Spirit, compact of the noblest gifts, each and all moulded to the fullest—developed to the highest, the widest—by unwearied constancy in their culture, their use, their application to the world without and the world within. And, the result was—the deposit among a race destined in the latter days to replenish the earth and to be the most influential of all races—of a special element of power to be employed permanently in the perfecting, the Christianizing of men. As is the wont so often, in the workings of God, this was done once—once for all. To our great SEER and INTERPRETER, there has been no successor like or second. In the particular arena, in which, in one point of view, his activity manifested itself, and which was, as we have seen, a simple accident of that manifestation—immediately on his disappearance, a fatal deterioration commenced.

The predestined work was done: and, this completed, the doer was withdrawn. He and his indeed, calculating by the years the human frame is constructed to endure, looked forward with reason to a continuance for many days, amidst the familiar scenes of this lower life. But the Father of the spirits of all flesh, knew best when it was fitting that the spirit which had been so “finely touched”—and that too, with such “fine issues”—should return to his sphere and be classed according to his works.

§ 2. *The most Authentic Effigies of Shakespeare.*

The temporary vesture of the flesh, which he laid down, has mouldered to dust, undisturbed, in the Church of the Holy Trinity at Stratford—the grand old parish-church where he had learned to commune with his fellow-citizens and fellow-Christians, in the national worship of his country. (Note XIX.) There, within a niche in the northern wall of its chancel, is preserved the well-known presentment of his outward form, which, sculptured from a mask taken from the actual face, approximates, it is likely, more nearly than any of the painted or engraved portraitures, to what the reality was. The more we study the whole contour of that somewhat rudely carved, but expressive bust,—as we all now can do by holding in our hands direct reflections of it from the photographic mirror—the more we shall feel that we have there, so far as is possible now, the genuine unidealized man before us. Among the many things associated with the memory of the great poet which interest the imagination of pilgrims to his native place, that bust is the true AGALMA, as the old Greek would say—the sacred gem—the object possessed of the strongest power of fascination. (Notes XX., XXI. and XXII.)

Upon it—in its stony stillness in the stately church, how many of our fellow-men have this day been looking, with a freshened interest !

Towards it, seen only ideally and in phantasy, how many more, in widely-separated portions of the globe, East and West, South and North, have in like manner been gazing !

To it—and, along with it and by it, to the meaning of the man and of his existence, in the designs of God—you also, with them, have had now, your intelligent regards, in all reverence directed.

NOTES.

I.

Ter-century of Coverdale's Translation in 1835.

The Ter-century in 1835, of Coverdale's Translation of the Holy Scriptures, inaugurated the "Centenaries" of the present generation. October the 4th, the day when the printing of the book was "lynished," fell in that year on a Sunday; and throughout England there was a very general "improvement" of the occasion. On that day the writer happened to be in St. Mary's Church, Oxford, where it so chanced that J. H. Newman delivered a discourse on St. John vi., 44; but very characteristically, he made no allusion to Coverdale or his translation. It was this ter-century of 1835 that led to the erection of the beautiful "Martyrs' Memorial" in Oxford, near the spot where Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer "yielded their bodies to be burned" in 1555-56.

In 1863 occurred two remarkable ter-centenaries; one in January, of the final promulgation and first synodical subscription of the "Thirty-Nine Articles" as they stand now; the other,—observed by a Congress at Mechlin in Belgium, in August,—of the termination of the Council of Trent. In 1862, on St. Bartholomew's Day, was a bi-centenary of the re-occupancy of the parish-churches of England by the English clergy after their temporary ejection during the Cromwellian period. Thus within eighteen months there was given occasion to thoughtful persons to review three great ecclesiastical epochs, from whence has, in great measure, resulted the marshalling of Christians in the British Empire, as elsewhere, under the three opposing banners of the Contra-Reformation, the Reformation, and the Ultra-Reformation. See an interesting article on *Subscription and Inter-communion* in the Colonial Church Chronicle for January, 1864.

II.

The so-called New Learning of 1535.

On the appearance of printed editions of the Scriptures in the Hebrew and Greek originals, some of the more illiterate monks declaimed from the pulpits that "there was now a new language discovered called Greek, of which people should beware, since it was that which produced all heresies; that in this language was come forth a book called the New Testament, which was now in everybody's hands, and was full of thorns and briars. And there had also another language now started up, which they called Hebrew; and that they who learned it were turned Hebrews." Gray's Key to the Old Test., p. 30, where is a reference to Erasmus, Epist., Lib. 33, No. 42.

III.

Ter-century of Galileo at Pisa, Feb. 1864.

With the Italian people the name of Galileo is now a watchword of progress and religious reformation. The 300th anniversary of the great astronomer's birthday (Feb. 18) was this year observed with great enthusiasm at Pisa, his native place. The Leaning Tower, the scene of many of his scientific experiments, was illumined on the occasion, appearing in the night as if it were transparent from top to bottom. Over the door of the Church of St. Andrew, where he was

baptized, was placed this inscription, "Grazie immortali al Supremo Datore d'ogni bene, perche in questo giorno or sono tre secoli, il natale di Galileo Galilei illustro Pisa d' insperata e chiarissima luce."—"Immortal thanks to the Supreme Giver of all good, that on this day, three centuries ago, the birth of Galileo Galilei illumined Pisa with unhopd-for and resplendent light."—A correspondent of the "Reader," writing from Pisa on the day of the commemoration, wonders whether in England, on the 23rd of April, any one would think of thanking "the Giver of all good" for Shakespeare. It is not improbable that many would think of doing so. At the special Public Service on this 23rd, in the Cathedral of Toronto, the *Benedicite Opera Omnia* was sung with intention, instead of the *Te Deum*, as being peculiarly appropriate, calling, as that hymn does, on universal nature, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, which the great poet was permitted, under God, so marvellously to read and interpret, to break forth, so to speak, into praises to the "Supreme Giver of all good."

IV.

The Idola of Bacon.

"Quatuor sunt Idolorum quæ mentes humanas obsident. Iis (docendi gratiâ) nomina imposuimus; ut primum genus, Idola Tribus; secundum, Idola Specus; tertium Idola Fori; quartum, Idola Theatri vocentur." Aph. xxxix. *Nov. Org. Works*, i. 250. Ed. Boston. The first are fallacies to which the whole race, as human, is prone; the second are such as the individual by his special constitution is liable to; the third, are those which adhere to words in intercourse with men; and the fourth arise from theories and preconceived notions.—See the Notes of Messrs. Ellis & Spedding on the above-cited passage.

V.

Absence of Malignancy in Shakespeare's Pictures of Men.

The complete freedom from malignancy in Shakespeare's delineations reminds us of the sketches of the modern humorists, Doyle, Leech, Tenniel, etc. His Shylock is not a satire on Jews but on men prone to sharp practice. It is Coleridge who remarks that all sarcasms on women are put by him in the mouths of villains. *Vide Works*, iv. 183. Harpers.

VI.

The English of Shakespeare and of the present Translation of the Scriptures alike.

As specimens of the similar use of words in the English version of the Scriptures and in Shakespeare, take "convince" for "convict," as

Else might the world convince of levity
As well my undertakings, as your counsels.

Troil. and Cres., ii. 2.

"Single" for "simple"; as "I speak it with a single heart." *Hen. VIII.*, v. 2. "Wink" for "keep the eyes closed"; as "I see things too, although you judge I wink." *Two G. of Ver.*, i. 2. "Carriage" for "things carried"; as "Time goes upright with his carriage." *Temp.*, v. 1. "Thought" for "anxious care" *meritina*; as "Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." *Ham.*, iii. 1. "She pined in thought." *Twelfth Night*, iv. 4. "By" for "in relation to"; as "Then speak the truth by her." *Two G. of Ver.*, ii. 4., etc.

[To illustrate St. Paul's "I know nothing by myself,"—*I. Cor.*, iv. 4—compare Lord Cobham's Letter to Raleigh ("Life and Times," p. 148), "So God have mercy on my soul, as I know no treason by you!"]

In the English Book of Common Prayer, again, "indifferently," for example, is illustrated by, "Then hear me speak indifferently for all." *Tit. And.*, i. 1. "Amazement" at the close of the Marriage Service, by "Put yourself not into amazement how these things should be." *M. for M.*, iv. 2., etc.

VII.

The Dramas of Shakespeare Stimulant of Good in Man.

"Memoriâ repetatis, oro, quæ cuique vestrum fuerit animi sententia, fabulas istas primâ vice perlegenti. Nonne, cum totius Poematis de cursu, proborum vos ac piorum, si qui erant, partes suscipere meministis; tum præcipue cum ventum erat ad "Plaudite," quasi stimulus virtutis in animo relictos sentire? neque ejus modo virtutis, quæ specie quadam et fervore juvenum corda commovere valeat, verum etiam severioris hujus, castimonîæ, fidei, industriæ, pietatis? Ut facile quis intelligere possit, quæ aliquando subturpicula intextuntur, partim sæculi esse, non scriptoris; partim, ut ebrios Laconicis pueris, tanquam odiosa ac vitanda proponi. Ergo illum virtuti ex animo favisce non est cur dubitemus: cum præsertim plerique eorum, qui tunc scenicis dabant operam, in alia omnia abire consueverint." *Vide Keble: De Poetica Vi Medicâ.* Tom., i. p. 58.

VIII.

The Exquisite Accuracy of Shakespeare in Minute Points of Character.

"Nusquam fermè apud illum ne tria quidem verba profert seu colonus forte astans, sive miles, seu scurra popularis, seu quivis alius, quin propriæ indolis significationem quandam injiciat. Itaque jure quodam singulari tribuitur Shakespeare ea laus, ut humani nihil à se alienum putet: quippe qui in omnium qui ubique extant hominum formas, ingenia, mores transferre se noverit: in hoc Naturæ planè similis, quæ omni curâ fingere solet et ornare non ea tantum loca quæ vulgo ob eximiam quandam pulchritudinem invisuntur, sed et obscuris quosque angulos, nullo neque solis radio neque oculo admirantis facile tangendos. Eadem Natura pari sedulitate, ut ita dicam, proceras ornavit quercus, ac minutissimum quodque seu fungorum sive filicum genus, nascentium forte sub umbrâ regiæ arboris. Atque in hanc fortasse partem accipiat aliquis non male piam majorum nostrorum diligentiam, qui in sacrosanctis ædibus sollicitè curabant exsculpi ac poliri summa etiam laquearia, posticam columnarum partem, cetera quæque à luce et aspectu remota." *Keble: De Poetica Vi Medicâ.* ii. 565.

IX.

S. T. Coleridge's Estimate of Shakespeare in 1818.

"O! when I think of the inexhaustible mine of virgin treasure in our Shakespeare,—that I have been almost daily reading him since I was ten years old,—that the thirty intervening years have been unremittingly and not fruitlessly employed in the study of the Greek, Latin, English, Italian, Spanish and German *belle-lettrists*, and the last fifteen years in addition, far more intensely in the analysis of the laws of life and reason as they exist in man—and that upon every step I have made forward in taste, in acquisition of facts from history or my own observation, and in knowledge of the different laws of being and their apparent exceptions, from accidental collision of disturbing forces,—that at every new accession of information, after every successful exercise of meditation, and every

fresh presentation of experience, I have unfailingly discovered a proportionate increase of wisdom and intuition in Shakespeare; when I know this, and know too, that by a conceivable and possible, though hardly to be expected, arrangement of the British theatres, not all indeed, but a large, a very large, proportion of this indefinite all— * * * might be sent into the heads and hearts—into the very souls of the mass of mankind, to whom, except by this living comment and interpretation, it must remain for ever a sealed volume, a deep well without a wheel or a windlass;—it seems to me a pardonable enthusiasm to steal away from sober likelihood, and share in so rich a feast in the fairy world of possibility!" *Vide Works*, vol. iv. 45. Harpers' Ed. Again: p. 185, "There are three powers:—Wit, which discovers partial likeness hidden in general diversity; subtlety, which discovers the diversity concealed in general apparent sameness; and profundity, which discovers an essential unity under all the semblances of difference. Give to a subtle man fancy, and he is a wit; to a deep man imagination, and he is a philosopher. Add again, pleasurable sensibility in the three-fold form of sympathy with the interesting in morals, the impressive in form, and the harmonious in sound, and you have the poet. But combine all,—wit, subtlety and fancy, with profundity, imagination, and moral and physical susceptibility of the pleasurable, and let the object of action be man universal; and we shall have—O rash prophecy! say rather, we have—a SHAKESPEARE!"

X.

The Sonnets of Shakespeare.

The Sonnets of Shakespeare have been in too many points unfairly taken as illustrative of his own private history. Very many of them were probably written with no reference whatever to himself, but wholly as personating, for the occasion, one or other of his many friends,—the earl of Southampton, for example, or the earl of Pembroke. A few of them may even, without much difficulty, be imagined to have been sportively feigned as missives from the innamoratas of these friends in reply to verses previously supplied by himself. Some of them may be regarded as sketches in his art—as *parerga* thrown off while working at particular characters, placed in particular situations in his dramas. Some of them, if not direct translations, may be close imitations of now forgotten or not yet detected Italian originals. Whilst amongst them are without doubt some which may be taken as expressive of his own personal natural feelings in relation to his wife, from whom, while establishing his fortune by literary labour and business ventures in London, he was absent during portions of every year. But in regard even to these, we cannot bring ourselves to imagine that they were ever intended by him to be laid at her feet,—however fully the pith and substance of them may have been, from time to time, transmitted in homely prose, by post or carrier, to Stratford.

Of this miscellaneous *Liber Studiorum*, possession appears to have been obtained surreptitiously; and a printer was found to give it, without authority, to the world. Though consisting partly of groups, and partly of independent pieces, the whole came forth as a continuous poem, the sonnets following one another as stanzas in haphazard order, just as they had chanced to be entered on the pages of the manuscript book. Misprints and misplaced words abounded, to the great obscuration and detriment of the poet's meaning.

Sonnet cxii., supposed by some critics to have been addressed to his wife, but not improbably written for, and in the character of, one of his friends, as before suggested, is here given at length, for the purpose of offering a conjectural emendation in a line, which appears to have been given up in despair, by the commentators.

Your love and pity doth the impression fill
 Which vulgar scandal stamp'd upon my brow ;
 For what care I who calls me well or ill
 If you o'ergreen my bad, my good allow ?
 You are my all-the-world, and I must strive
 To know my shames and praises from your tongue ;
 None else to me, nor I to none alive,
 That I am steel'd 'gainst censure, right or wrong.
 In so profound abysm I throw all care
 Of others' voices, that my adder's sense
 To critic and to flatterer stopped are.
 Mark how with my neglect I do dispense :—
 You are so strongly in my purpose bred,
 That all the world besides methinks are dead.

Line 8 is usually read "That my steel'd sense or changes, right or wrong." A mistake of letters in transcription, or of sounds in the hearing, has here so confused the words as almost to deprive them of all meaning. By printing as above, we recover the good word "censure," and get rid of "sense," which is not likely to have been here, when it occurred immediately afterwards, at the end of line 10.

XI.

The Religious Spirit of the Founders of the Literature of England.

Here is an extract from Sir Edward Coke's Preface (A. D. 1550) to his "Institutes of the Laws of England":

"Before I entered into any of these parts of our Institutes I, acknowledging mine own weakness and want of judgment to undertake so great works, directed my humble suit and prayer to the Author of all goodness and wisdom, out of the Book of Wisdom. *Pater et Deus misericordia, da mihi sedium tuarum assistricem sapientiam, mitte eam de calis sanctis tuis, et a sede magnitudinis tue, ut mecum sit, et mecum laboret, ut sciam quid acceptum sit apud te.* Father and God of Mercy, give me wisdom, the assistant of thy seats; O send her out of thy holy heavens, and from the seat of thy greatness, that she may be present with me and labour with me, that I may know what is pleasing unto thee. Amen."

This harmonizes with Hooker's grand reference to abstract Law, at the beginning of his "Polity." (Bk. I., xvi. 8.)

"Of Law there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power; both angels and men and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy."

Then read what Raieigh says in his "History of the World" (*vide* "Life and Times," p. 219):

"He is rather a fool or ungrateful to God, or both, that doth not acknowledge, how mean soever his estate may be, that the same is far greater than that which God oweth him; or doth not acknowledge, how sharp soever his afflictions be, that the same are yet far less than those which are due unto him. And if a heathen wise man call the adversities of the world but *tributa vivendi*—'the tributes of living,'—a wise Christian man ought to know them and bear them but as the tributes of offending. He ought to bear them man-like, and resolvedly, and not as those whining soldiers do, *qui gementes sequuntur imperatorem*. For seeing God (who is the author of all our tragedies) hath written out for us and appointed us all the parts we are to play, and hath not in their distribution been partial to the most mighty princes of the world, * * * why should other men, who are but as the least worms, complain of wrongs?"

Again: (Hist. of World, as quoted in "Life and Times," p. 192) "To repeat God's judgments in particular, upon those of all degrees which have played with His mercies, would require a volume apart; for the sea of examples hath no bottom. The marks set on private men are with their bodies cast into the earth, and their fortunes written only in the memory of those that lived with them, so as those that succeed, and have not seen the fall of others, do not fear their own faults. God's judgments upon the great and greatest have been left to posterity—first, by those happy hands which the Holy Ghost hath guided; and, secondly, by their virtue who have gathered the acts and ends of men mighty and remarkable in the world."

A Prayer in verse by Raleigh. ("Life and Times," p. 176.)

To thee, O Jesu! I direct my eyes,
To thee my hands, to thee my humble knees;
To thee my heart shall offer sacrifice;
To thee my thoughts, who my thoughts only sees;
To thee myself—myself and all I give;
To thee I die, to thee I only live!

Extract from the *Pilgrimage* of Raleigh, written in prospect of execution in 1603. (*Vide* "Life and Times," p. 167.)

"Then those holy paths we'll travel
Strew'd with rubies thick as gravel;
Ceilings of diamonds, sapphire floors,
Hill walls of coral, and pearly bowers,
From thence to heaven's bribeless hall,
Where no corrupted voices brawl;
No conscience molten into gold,
No forged accuser bought or sold;
No cause deferr'd no vain-spent journey,
For their Christ is the king's attorney,
Who pleads for all without degrees,
And he hath angels but no fees.
And when the grand twelve million jury
Of our sins with direful fury,
'Gainst our souls black verdicts give,
Christ pleads his death, and then we live.
Be thou my speaker, taintless pleader,
Unblotted lawyer, true proceeder!
Thou giv'st salvation even for alms,
Not with a bribed lawyer's palms.
Then this is my eternal plea
To Him that made heaven, earth and sea,
Seeing my flesh must die so soon,
And want a head to die next noon,
Just at the stroke of death, my arms being spread,
Set on my soul an everlasting head:
So shall I ready, like a palmer fit,
Tread those blest paths shewn in Thy Holy Writ."

Here is a portion of a Prayer or Psalm of Bacon's. (Works, ii. 407. B. Montagu's Ed., Phil.) "Thy creatures have been my books, but Thy Scriptures much more. I have sought Thee in the courts, fields and gardens, but I have found Thee in Thy Temples."

Here is a sentence from his "Student's Prayer." "This also we humbly and earnestly beg, that human things may not prejudice such as are divine: neither that from the unlocking of the gates of sense and the kindling of a greater natural light, anything of incredulity, or intellectual night, may arise in our minds towards divine mysteries."

The conclusion of his *Abecedarium Naturæ*: "This is the form and rule of our alphabet. May God the Creator, preserver and renewer of the universe, protect and govern this work, both in its ascent to His glory, and its descent to

the good of mankind, for the sake of His mercy and goodwill to men, through His only Son, Immanuel, God with us."

Some observations from his "Interpretation of Nature," as applicable *mutatis mutandis*, to-day, as they were three hundred years ago: "With respect to augmentations and what may be called the new shores and tracts of philosophy, all from the side of religion is full of grovelling suspicion and impotent disdain. Thus, some in their simplicity fear that any deeper inquisition into Nature may penetrate perchance beyond the allowed and sanctioned limit of sobriety, improperly applying what is said of the secrets of God, many of which remain closed under the divine signet, to the secrets of nature which are guarded by no interdict. Others, with greater cunning, conceive that if men are ignorant of second causes, each particular may be more easily referred to the Word of God, which they think is of the highest interest to religion; though this is no other than seeking to flatter God with a lie. * * * From which it is sufficiently clear that in opinions of this kind there is much weakness, and not a little envy and bitterness. For natural philosophy is, next to the Divine word, the most certain enemy of superstition, and the most wholesome food of faith; and is, therefore, rightly considered the truest and loveliest handmaid of religion: the one displaying the will of God, the other His power. So that he was not wrong who said "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God," joining in an intimate union, information of His will, and meditation on His power. But, though this is most certain, it still remains among the most effectual hindrances to natural philosophy, that all which is pronounced by blind zeal and superstition is considered out of the reach of dispute." Works, i. 424-5. B. Montagu's Ed.

Finally, here is a sentence taken almost *ad aperturam* from the works of another celebrated contemporary of the poet—Thomas Hobbs of Malmesbury (1588-1679).

"Though I believe," he says in his *Answer to Archb. Bramhall*, (Works, iv. Sir W. Molesworth's Ed.) "the Omnipotence of God, and that He can do what He will, yet I dare not say *how* everything is done, because I cannot conceive nor comprehend either the Divine Substance, or the way of its operation. And I think it impious to speak concerning God anything of my own head, or upon the authority of philosophers or school-men, which I understand not, without warrant in the Scripture: and what I say of Omnipotence, I say of Ubiquity."

XII.

The Tempest, Shakespeare's farewell Drama.

It may be conceived that in several of the speeches of Prospero to Ariel, the poet indirectly gives some expression to his own feelings of gratification at the near prospect of final retirement to quiet and liberty at Stratford. In the words of the Epilogue

"Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
And what strength I have's my own,
Which is most faint"—

is there an indication of failing health? In the reply "I'll deliver all"—to Alonzo's address "I long to hear the story of your life, which must take the ear strangely," have we a hint of a contemplated autobiography?

XIII.

The Purchase of New Place.

A dialogue in the March number of Macmillan (1864), supposed to take place at Stratford in 1579, between old Master Grunsey and Goodman Dodd, two

of the ordinary folk of the place, is *eccellentemente trovato*. During the talk between the two worthies over their ale, the recent purchase of

"Sir Hugh's great house beside the Grammar School," comes up, and is thus discussed :

DODD. New Place ben't no such bargain, when all's done ;
'Twas dear, I knows it.

GRUNSEY. Thou bought'st better, mun,
At Hoggin Fields: all am't alike in skill.

D. Thanks to the Lord above ! I've not done ill.
No more has thee, friend Grunsey, in thy trade.

G. So-so. But here's young Will wi' money made,
And money saved ; whereon I sets him down,
Say else who likes, a credit to the town ;
Tho' some do shake their heads at player-folk.

D. A civil man he be to chat and joke ;
I've oft times had a bit o' talk wi' Will."

The "Sir Hugh" referred to, is Sir Hugh Clopton, a Lord Mayor of *London*, temp. Hen. VII. ; he erected or caused to be erected, the existing noble bridge of fourteen arches over the Avon, at the *Ford* where a *Via Strata*, a Roman road, or road formed after the Roman manner, crossed the Avon.

XIV.

Genio Terræ Britannicæ.

The Rev. Dr. McCaul's Volume on Britanno-Roman Inscriptions has stamped on its cover the figure of an Altar, found in 1771 near Auchindavy, one of the stations of the Wall of Antoninus, bearing the inscription GENIO . TERRAE . BRITANNICAE . M . COCCEIUS . FIRMUS . LEG . II . AVG. See also Stuart's *Caledonia Romana*, p. 332.

XV.

Schlegel on Shakespeare.

"Clear and intelligible even to the understanding of a child, wondrous and fascinating to the youthful imagination, he is still the friend and fellow-traveller of the full-grown man, the confidant of his thoughts and most serious feelings ; when the prime of life is past, the poet is still his faithful companion ; many other associates, to whom he clung in youth, appear empty and frivolous, and while he marvels to what they owed their former fascinating charm, our glorious Shakespeare retains all his value to the last, unshaken by the few solitary blemishes, defects of taste, as they are called, which are sometimes pointed out, but which are in general merely the offspring of our own misapprehension." *Vide* Schlegel ; "Æsthetic Works," p. 267. Ed. Bohn.

XVI.

Shakespeare the Poet of the Teutonic Nations.

"Shakespeare is most justly acknowledged to be the favourite poet not only of the English, but of all nations of Teutonic origin : excepting only when a foreign and unnatural influence intervenes, and people have already become false to their original character and better feeling." Schlegel : "Æsthetic : " p. 267. Ed. Bohn.

XVII.

Shakespeare the Dramatic Homer of the North.

"Since the time of Homer no pictures have been produced so life-like and universal as those which Shakespeare places before our eyes, comprehensively grand, yet faithful to nature, even in minute details and personal characteristics. He is the dramatic Homer of the North, of our North, the latter, civilized, and polished North, no longer ruling by the power of nature alone, but in the added strength of intellectual energy, a highly-developed world variously framed and moulded." Schlegel: "*Æsthetic*:" p. 272.

XVIII.

Guizot's Estimate of Shakespeare.

"The mighty genius whose view had embraced the whole destiny of man could not have failed to recognize its sublime secret; a sure instinct revealed to him this final explanation, without which all is darkness and uncertainty. Furnished therefore with the moral thread which never breaks in his hands, he proceeds with firm steps through the embarrassments of circumstances and the perplexities of varied feelings; nothing can be simpler at bottom than Shakespeare's action; nothing less complicated than the impression which it leaves on our minds. Our interest is never divided, and still less does it waver between two opposite inclinations, or two equally powerful affections. As soon as the characters become known, and their position is developed, our choice is made; we know what we desire and what we fear, whom we hate and whom we love. There is as little conflict of duties as of interests; and the conscience wavers no more than the affections. * * * The characters are not represented as deceiving or deceived, hovering between vice and virtue, weakness and crime; what they are, they are frankly and openly; their actions are depicted in vigorous outlines, so that even the weakest eyesight cannot mistake them. And yet—so admirable is his perception of truth!—in these actions, so positive, complete, and consistent, all the inconsistencies and fantastic mixtures of human nature exist and are displayed." Guizot: "*Shakespeare and his Times*:" p. 97, 98. Harpers' Ed.

XIX.

Shakespeare a Member of the National Church of England.

To the question put in a Roman Catholic periodical called the *Rambler*, No. 7, 1854 (see Bohn's "*Lowndes*," p. 2337), "*Was Shakespeare a Catholic?*" an affirmative answer must be given, if the term "*Catholic*" is understood in its unpartisan sense, either theologically, as the English Church accepts it, or etymologically as non-conformists use it. But if the term is to have the exclusive sense of "*Advocate of the alleged rights of the Bishop of Rome out of his own country, viz. Italy*," then it is difficult to say where are the grounds in the poet's writings for anything but a negative reply. We are nevertheless informed that M. Rio is engaged at an affirmative one, with the term in the question understood in the latter sense. Cardinal Wiseman, who drew such a rosy-hued picture of Modern England at Malines in October, 1863, will find no difficulty in furnishing a similar answer in his promised lecture in July.

It is, however, a patent fact to all readers that Shakespeare lived and died a member of the ancient historic Church of England.

We cannot see that he ever had any dealings with the newly-formed communion of the Bishop of Rome's adherents, who first separated themselves from

the ancient historic church of the country in 1569, the eleventh year of Elizabeth's reign, after the issuing of the mandate (dated Feb. 25) of Michael Gislieri, the then bishop, interdicting "Universis et singulis Proceribus, Subditis, Populis et aliis prædictis, ne illi ejusve monitis, mandatis, et legibus audeant obedire."

One word may not here be deemed out of place, on a point which foreign writers, mystified by the histories and catechisms supplied to them by Jesuits, cannot see. In a work translated from the French, lately (1864) published by Chapman and Hall, M. Alphonse Esquiros remarks: "It is curious to notice in the country parts of England, with what care the monuments of the faith, the charges, benefices, traditions and lands of the church passed from the hands of the Catholic clergy into those of the Protestant. The very trace of this transition," he says, "is now almost effaced from the soil of Great Britain." No wonder, when no transition of the pronounced kind which he imagines, ever took place. The English clergy and the English congregations who in 1570 accepted reform, did not cease to be what they were confessedly before—Catholic. In France, Spain, Italy, Austria, etc., it is supposed that by the acceptance of ecclesiastical reform,—by a return to earlier and simpler arrangements, Catholicity must come to an end. In books destined to be read in those countries, this point ought to be, in a friendly spirit, explained. It is a point on which some Englishmen themselves are not clear.

An excellent, earnest-minded man, the Rev. Richard Byfield, was Vicar of Stratford in 1616. His clerical visitors appear—from certain memoranda in the Chamberlain's books of 1614—to have found quarters occasionally at New Place. On the strength of this evidence a non-conformist paper lately ventured to express the hope—the trust—that, ere he departed hence, "the greatest amongst men," as the writer somewhat strongly speaks, "became a *child of God!*" Thus we poor worms of the earth undertake to talk one of the other! In proportion as we think this man or that man coincides in notion or custom of life with ourselves, we, with a quasi-charity allow him to be, perhaps, a child of God! *Melius est ut incidam in manus Domini, multa enim misericordiæ ejus sunt, quam in manus hominum!*

We have here another example of that peculiar use of a phrase or of a word by which partisans unconsciously beg the whole question, as between themselves and those whom they would oppose.

XX.

The Bust of Shakespeare at Stratford.

The bust in the Church of the Holy Trinity at Stratford was originally in colour. Towards the close of the last century it suffered the indignity of a coat of white paint. "The wretched Malone," exclaims Charles Lamb, (Elia ii. 3.) * * * "bribed the sexton of Stratford church to let him whitewash the painted effigy of old Shakespeare, which stood there, in rude but lively fashion depicted, to the very colour of the cheek, the eye, the eyebrow, hair, the very dress he used to wear—the only authentic testimony we had, however imperfect, of these curious parts and parcels of him. They covered him over with a coat of white paint!" With an expression of indignant emphasis, too strong to be repeated, he adds, "If I had been a justice of peace for Warwickshire, I would have clapt both commentator and sexton fast in the stocks, for a pair of meddling sacrilegious varlets. I think I see them at their work—these sapient trouble-tombs!"

The paint has now with great care been removed; and the bust again appears in colour, not so delicate perhaps as that which is to be seen on the works of Gibson, but in keeping with its date and place. A vast amount of labour has been entailed on the present generation by the Malones—mostly churchwardens—

of the last century, who coated over with whitewash the frescoes, the gilding, the veined marbles, the freckled granites, which beautified the interiors of the old parish-churches.

The photograph in Friswell's "Life-portraits," having been taken on a level with the face, presents the features favourably for study. It will be observed how fully the parts which are supposed to indicate language and perceptive power and memory, are developed.

Another plate in Friswell shows the interior of the chancel of this fine old church with its noble east window. In this picture we have an illustration of the unreflecting way in which, in times past, monuments were wont to be put up in churches. Blocking up the space between the end of the altar and the north wall, and as prominent to the view of the assembled congregation as the communion table itself, is the tomb, with recumbent effigy, of John Combe! In the interval on the south side is another but altogether dissimilar great structure—a kind of buffet for the reception of a large bust, and other conspicuous and most incongruous objects!

Executors in those days appear generally to have been possessed of an obtuse sense of modesty, propriety, architectural symmetry and beauty. To make room for memorials destined to be resented by posterity as impertinences, they did not hesitate to dig a hole in a venerable wall anywhere, to chop away a mullion or two on one side of a noble window, to cut a great piece out of a stately column, consisting perhaps of an exquisite sheaf of slender shafts reaching from the pavement to the groined roof!

How easily might there be introduced into the designs of church interiors, or exteriors, a series of panels or recesses harmonizing with the architecture of the building, for the reception of memorial inscriptions, medallions, and busts, which then, instead of being eye-sores, might contribute to richness and dignity of effect. I suggest "exteriors," because in countries where lighted stoves are indispensable for many months in every year, interiors are generally cleared out at intervals by fire. The shell, if of stone or brick, with its external decorations, may continue available for the use of another generation.

XXI.

Shakespeare's Latin Epitaph.

Judicio Pylum, genio Socratem, arte Maronem
Terra tegit, populus mœret, Olympus habet.

This distich, perhaps by the poet's son-in-law, Dr. Hall, is generally described as a pair of lame Latin verses, and then dismissed. With the exception of the shortening of the first syllable of the fourth word, which of course by the old rule, "longa vero non mutatur," is not allowable, the whole forms an epigram as good as the generality of those that we meet with on tombs. As a testimony to the sentiment of friends and neighbours in regard to the poet at the time of his death, these lines deserve attention. They declare that he who was laid in the earth below, whose loss men bewailed when the other world received him, was to be likened for judiciousness, to the old sage of Pylos, Nestor; for wit and wisdom, to a Socrates; for poetic glamour and skill, to a Virgil. We have here a hint of the way in which the superior mind of the departed had been looked up to; a hint of his frank intercourse with all sorts and conditions of his fellowmen; of his friendly passages of question and answer with them; of his solution haply of many a little moral and metaphysical problem for them. Would there had been an intelligent Plato about this Socrates to have taken down some of his waste discourse! The comparison with Virgil sounds to us somewhat tame. He certainly had all Virgil in him, and a great deal more. He contained at least a whole Horace besides, Warwickshire his Apulia, the Avon his Aufidus; the honest countryfolk round

Shottery and Charlecote, his *Ofelli*, his *fortes coloni*, his *uxores solibus perustæ*. Much of his philosophy is very Horatian.—Honest hearty Homer would have been the parallel. But in 1616 the name of Virgil had more of the old mediæval associations clinging to it, than it has now. It is with Virgil as the wizard, that he is compared. On an early portrait of Shakespeare, said to be nearly contemporaneous, is the pregnant allusion "*Ut Magus*"—to be understood only by its context in Hor. Ep. I. Lib. ii.

"Ac ne forte putes, me, quæ facere ipse recusem,
Quum recte tractent alii, laudare maligne;
Ille per extentum funem mihi posse videtur
Ire poeta; meum qui pectus inaniter angit,
Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,
Ut Magus, et modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis."

"Though I attempt not the dramatic muse,
Let me not seem, malignant, to refuse
The praises due to those, who with success
Have tried this way to fame; for I confess,
He gives a desperate trial of his art,
Who with imagined woes can wring my heart;
To pity soothe me, or to anger warm,
Or with false fears my panting breast alarm;
Then, *like a sorcerer*, my rapt spirit bear
To Athens, or to Thebes, and fix it there."

An apt description of the dramatic poet's magical power over susceptible minds! This is the kind of "art" referred to in the epitaph, and there described as Virgilian. [In the "desperate trial,"—the "*per extentum funem posse videtur ire poeta*," who has not brought to his recollection, as a specimen of extreme trial of art in a man's specialty, the feat of Blondin at the Falls of Niagara?] The distich under the bust at Stratford might be supplemented at this day from the epitaph of the admirable Crichton of 1494. See Hallam, Lit. Hist. i. 210.

"Johannes jacet hic Mirandola: cetera norunt
Et Tagus, et Ganges; forsan et Antipodes."

As here on the shores of the St. Lawrence, so literally on the Ganges, literally at the Antipodes, where Mirandola is forgotten if he ever were remembered, the name of Shakespeare is a household word.

The allusion to the poet as a *Magus*, and as a *Socrates*, may recall to the mind of some, what the latter is reported by Plato as saying in the Dialogue entitled "*Charmides*." He had learned, he says, from one of the physicians of King Zamolxis of Thrace, who were said to be able to render men immortal, that as it is not proper to attempt to cure the eyes without the head, nor the head without the body; so neither is it proper to cure the body without the soul; and that the soul is cured by *certain incantations*; and that these incantations are *beautiful reasons*; and that by such, temperance was generated in the soul, which, when generated and present, can easily impart health both to the head and to the rest of the body. See Plato, vol. iv. p. 118. Ed. Bohn. Such "*incantations*" and "*beautiful reasons*," quickening and curative to the spirit, abound, as every one knows, in the writings of Shakespeare.

XXII.

Orthography of Shakespeare's Name.

At the close of his two Dedications to the Earl of Southampton, prefixed to the "*Venus and Adonis*" and "*The Rape of Lucrece*" respectively, the poet subscribed his name as—WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. By this deliberate act he seems to have given the world to understand that such was the form his name should wear in after ages; and thus accordingly the first editors of his collected works, Heminge and Condell, rendered the name, as also did Ben Jonson, and all the other early admirers of Shakespeare.



